

Linda Clair
Four-and-a-half-day Meditation Retreat
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File 5a – Sunday morning guided meditation

So take a few deep breaths into the belly. You're still in your body. So as much as possible today – even though you might be thinking about going home – be in your body.

Take your attention to the top of your head. Feel the sensation on the top of your head. It's different to yesterday. It's different to half an hour ago, a minute ago. And it doesn't matter with how it feels. We get obsessed with how we feel – how "I" feel. We're always looking to feel good, feel a certain way, feel pleasure and not feel pain. But most of our pleasurable sensations are tainted with this fear that we're once again going to feel pain, whether it's emotional or physical. Pain is pain. Suffering is a reaction to pain. As long as you're in the body there is going to be pain at time. But there doesn't need to be so much emotional pain.

So feel the sensation of your eyelids on your eyes, your breath in your nostrils. It might be just a subtle sensation. But sometimes it such a relief to just be in your body, not look for something else, something deeper. This is it right now. When you accept that fully you stop looking for something else, something that is going to satisfy you forever.

Feel your mouth, your lips, your jaw, your chin. Feel your shoulders. Go to your left shoulder and go down your arm to your left elbow and feel your elbow. You don't need to imagine anything or change anything. Then go down to your left hand and feel your hand. And keep breathing into the belly, using your breath as an anchor in your body again and again and again. To unlearn a habit you need to go over it again and again and again. Go to your right shoulder and go down your arm to your right elbow, then down to your right hand and feel your hand. Take your attention to your chest and as you breathe in and out through the nose, feel the gentle movement of your chest with the breath. I might be quite subtle.

Then go down to the abdomen. I was told by my teachers, "Do everything from down here," from the abdomen – not from your head. Do everything with your body, in your body. So feel your abdomen rising and falling. Feel your thighs, your knees, your left foot, your right foot. Then feel your spine from the top of the spine, down your back to the bottom of the spine. Then feel your whole body.

There's so much going on in your body right now. And you don't need to know about it. It's functioning without you thinking about it, it's breathing without you thinking about it. It's so intelligent. So each time you realise you're not in your body – and you can't think and really be in your body – each time you realise you're not in your body, bring your attention back to the breath, the sensations. Use whatever sensations you can to be in your body.

And you probably won't realise how much in your body you are now until you leave here. So sit and watch – feel.